

CLAIM AMENDMENTS:

1. (canceled).

2. (currently amended) A bill handling apparatus according to claim 1 4, wherein a driving source for the conveying mechanisms is provided in the base unit, and a transmitter is provided in the base unit, the at least one intermediate unit, the deposit/withdrawal unit and the auxiliary unit for transmitting a driving force of the driving source is transmitted to the conveying mechanisms of the base unit and also to the respective conveying mechanisms of, the at least one intermediate unit(s) and, the deposit/withdrawal unit and the auxiliary unit via transmitter between the units, wherein the transmitter between the units include gears in mesh with each other between the units.

3. (currently amended) A bill handling apparatus according to claim 1 4, wherein driving ~~portions of~~ sources for the taking-in and taking-out mechanisms are individually provided in the base unit and the respective at least one intermediate units.

4. (currently amended) A bill handling apparatus ~~according to claim 1,~~ further comprising a casing having openings formed at an upper part of a front surface thereof for insertion and discharge of bills therethrough, a deposit/withdrawal unit at a lower position in the casing and a base unit at a lower position in the casing, at least one intermediate unit located between the deposit/withdrawal unit and the base unit inside the casing and an auxiliary unit provided above at least one or more of the base unit and the intermediate unit(s), wherein:

the deposit/withdrawal unit includes a bill introducing mechanism having a discriminating device for discriminating bills and adapted to introduce the bills through an insertion slot communicating with one of the openings for receiving the bills, a bill

discharging mechanism for discharging the bills to a discharge slot communicating with a second of the openings for discharging the bills, and a conveying mechanism that is drivable in forward and reverse directions, one end of the conveying mechanism being selectively positionable in communication with the bill introducing mechanism and the bill discharging mechanism via a switcher at a rear part of the deposit/withdrawal unit, an opposed end of the conveying mechanism being adapted to convey the bills along a bill conveyance path extending to a bottom end of the deposit/withdrawal unit;

the base unit includes a bill storage section, a conveying mechanism that is drivable in forward and reverse directions for conveying the bills within a specified range from an upper end of the base unit behind the bill storage section, and a taking-in and taking-out mechanism that is drivable in forward and reverse directions to take in and out the bills between the conveying mechanism and the bill storage section;

the at least one intermediate unit includes a bill storage section, a conveying mechanism that is drivable in forward and reverse directions to convey the bills within a range extending from an upper end to the bottom end of the at least one intermediate unit behind the bill storage section, a taking-in and taking-out mechanism that is drivable in forward and reverse directions to take in and out the bills between the conveying mechanism and the bill storage section, and a switcher for switching a bill moving direction between the conveying mechanism and the taking-in and taking-out mechanism; and

the auxiliary unit includes a storage space expanding portion in communication with the bill storage section of the unit located right below, and a conveying mechanism ~~which can be driven~~ that is drivable in forward and reverse directions and is

adapted to convey the bills in a range extending from the an upper end to the a bottom end of this the auxiliary unit behind the bill storage section.

5. (currently amended) A bill handling apparatus according to claim 4 4, wherein the casing includes a control board unit and a power supply unit, which are electrically connected with the respective units via detachable connectors.

6. (currently amended) A bill handling apparatus according to claim 4 4, wherein the respective units are individually withdrawable from the casing.

7. (currently amended) A bill handling apparatus according to claim 4 4, wherein ~~an entire internal construction comprised of the respective units is withdrawable~~ the deposit/withdrawal unit, the base unit, the at least one intermediate unit and the auxiliary unit all are integrated with each other to be withdrawn from the casing with these units when the deposit/withdrawal unit, the base unit, the at least one intermediate unit and the auxiliary unit are connected with each other.

8. (new) A bill handling apparatus comprising:

a casing having openings formed at an upper part of the front surface thereof for insertion and discharge of bills therethrough;

a deposit/withdrawal unit including a bill introducing mechanism having a discriminating device for discriminating bills and adapted to introduce the bills inserted through one of the openings, a bill discharging mechanism for discharging the bills to another of the openings, and a conveying mechanism which is driven in forward and reverse directions, one end of the conveying mechanism being selectively brought into communication with the bill introducing mechanism and the bill discharging mechanism via a switcher at a rear part of the deposit/withdrawal unit, and an opposed end of the

conveying mechanism being adapted to convey the bills along a bill conveyance path extending to a bottom end portion of the deposit/withdrawal unit;

a base unit including a bill storage section, a conveying mechanism which is driven in forward and reverse directions for conveying the bills within a specified range from an upper end of the base unit behind the bill storage section, a taking-in and taking-out mechanism which is driven in forward and reverse directions to take in and out the bills between the conveying mechanism and the bill storage section, and a bill stacking mechanism having a table for supporting bills, a pressing plate, a bill separating member and a movable member to move the separating member up and down to separate bills supported on the supporting table and to hold the bills against the pressing plate, and a lifter mechanism to move the movable member up and down;

at least one intermediate unit, the at least one intermediate unit including a bill storage section, a conveying mechanism which is driven in forward and reverse directions to convey the bills within a range extending from an upper end to a bottom end of the at least one intermediate unit behind the bill storage section, a taking-in and taking-out mechanism which is driven in forward and reverse directions to take in and out the bills between the conveying mechanism and the bill storage section, a switcher for switching a bill moving direction between the conveying mechanism and the taking-in and taking-out mechanism and a bill stacking mechanism having a table for supporting bills, a pressing plate, a bill separating member and a movable member to move the separating member up and down to separate bills supported on the supporting plate and to hold the bills against the pressing plate, the movable member of the at least one intermediate unit being adapted to be coupled with the movable member of the base unit or another said

intermediate unit to move therewith when the units are installed within the casing one on another.

9. (new) A bill handling apparatus according to claim 8, wherein each of the separating members of the base unit and the intermediate unit has a projection with an L-shaped cross-section, the projection being configured to pass over edges of a bill supported on the supporting table and to lift the bill to the pressing plate.

10. (new) A bill handling apparatus comprising:

a casing having openings formed at an upper part of a front surface thereof for insertion and discharge of bills therethrough;

a deposit/withdrawal unit including a bill introducing mechanism having a discriminating device for discriminating bills and adapted to introduce the bills inserted through one of the openings, a bill discharging mechanism for discharging the bills to another of the openings, and a conveying mechanism which is driven in forward and reverse directions, one end of the conveying mechanism being selectively brought into communication with the bill introducing mechanism and the bill discharging mechanism via a switcher at a rear part of the deposit/withdrawal unit, another end of the conveying mechanism being adapted to convey the bills along a bill conveyance path extending to a bottom end portion of the deposit/withdrawal unit, the bill discharging mechanism including a bill temporary holding frame, a bill temporary storage section and a pressure mechanism having a pressure member and a moving mechanism for moving the pressure member through a position of the bill supported on the temporary holding frame towards the bill temporary storage section to bring the bill from the bill temporary holding frame to the bill temporary storage section;

a base unit including a bill storage section, a conveying mechanism which is driven in forward and reverse directions and conveying the bills within a specified range from an upper end of the base unit behind the bill storage section, a taking-in and taking-out mechanism which is driven in forward and reverse directions to take in and out the bills between the conveying mechanism and the bill storage section; and

at least one intermediate unit, the at least one intermediate unit including a bill storage section, a conveying mechanism which is driven in forward and reverse directions to convey the bills within a range extending from an upper end to a bottom end of the intermediate unit behind the bill storage section, a taking-in and taking-out mechanism which is driven in forward and reverse directions to take in and out the bills between the conveying mechanism and the bill storage section, and a switcher for switching a bill moving direction between the conveying mechanism and the taking-in and taking-out mechanism.

11. (new) A bill handling apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the deposit/withdrawal unit further includes a rejection chamber for storing rejected bills, and a bill transferring belt mechanism for selectively transferring the bill in the bill temporary storage section to the opening for the bill discharge and to the rejection chamber.